

# **Camas County Wildland Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee**

## **2008 Accomplishments and 2009 Update and Needs**

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### **2008 Accomplishments:**

1. Wood River RC&D (Polly Huggins) Report: The Wood River RC&D wrote and received an IDL demonstration grant. There was a one day demonstration project on September 27, 2009 named ***South Fork of the Boise River Hazardous Fuels Reduction Demonstration Project***. The demonstration project took place on four private lands adjacent to federal lands generally north of Fleck Summit and south of the Bear Creek trailhead. The Sawtooth National Forest, Fairfield Ranger District, is in the early planning stages of a proposal to create a 300 foot buffer around the private land near the proposed project site. Thus the project aligned with hazardous fuels reduction projects on non federal lands with an active Forest Service project. The demonstration project gave hands on presentation on how to construct highly-effective landscape fuelbreaks at four project sites with the thinning of trees, removal of brush, and slash treatment. Thus, fire intensity was reduced markedly, making fire control by ground forces possible and keeping fires started on private property from spreading on to public lands. By having a demonstration project local sweat equity leveraged grant funds. Dead and dying trees were removed and the remaining trees were pruned as needed. Slash from the work was mulched. Therefore this project contributed to forest and rangeland health. The only municipal water supply system in the project area is on the Methodist Church Camp, Sawtooth, which provides water to 68 individuals. This demonstration project contributed to improved resiliency of municipal water supply system at the Methodist Church Camp from catastrophic fire. The Wood River RC&D organized the Demonstration Day by contacting the private landowners in the project area and through a public relations campaign. The Wood River RC&D also prepared an agenda and coordinated the Demonstration Day with educational speakers, presenters, and hands-on-projects. Harry Steele with IDL gave a Living on the Edge presentation, USFS Fairfield Ranger District talked on the current fire issues and installing a fuel break around private property and Jim Rineholt, USFS, will talked on Forest Health Cost Share program. Four demonstration sites were visited included hazardous fuels reduction around dwellings, shaded fuels break and fuel break. Contractor (Jack McCoy) demonstrated equipment working on a shaded fuel break. 148 landowners were contacted and 66 landowners attended the demonstration workshop.

Polly Huggins, Wood River RC&D, will write and submit another IDL grant for additional fuels reduction in this area for the 2009 and 2010 fire seasons.

2. Camas County Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department (Wayne Marolf and Wes Walker) Report:

In 2008 we had four training exercises. One exercise was on a building. The other three were grass wildland fire trainings. There were two chimney fires; four smoke class with no fire found; multiple class to fire alarm calls to both businesses and schools; six executions (traffic control) and NO wildland fires. Purchased a Ford F350 Truck for Wildland Rescue Unit. Still need to purchase a Wildland Urban Interface Engine.

3. US Forest Service Report: South Barker Wildland Fire Incident – Started August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008 by lightning, east of Featherville. The final update was on September 11, 2008 and a total of 34,250 acres burned. Fuels involved included Ponderosa Pine, Douglas fir, mixed conifer, and sage grass vegetation. During this time area closure was in effect on the Fairfield Ranger District, Sawtooth National Forest. Forest Road 227 was closed from Featherville to Big Smoky junction. Forest Road 012 was closed above Big Smoky junction into the Upper South Fork Boise River residential area. The expanded closure included Trail 070 along Paradise Creek and all trails to the west. There were 132 total personnel on the fire and the incident commander was Larry Svalberg

**2009 Camas County-Wide Updates and Needs (Equal Priority):**

Establish a new Fire District in the County.

Conduct Willow Creek and Upper South Fork of the Boise River WUI projects (2009 and 2010 grant).

Form a formal fire district for the southern end of Camas County.

Conduct a county-wide fire education program using various media including PSA's.

Purchase new apparatus.

Purchase an urban interface Fire Engine.

Conduct county-wide hazardous fuels and weed treatments (work with Camas CWMA)

Coordinate Camas WUI meeting with USFS and BLM (Wood River RC&D).

WUI Map Update: work with Twin Falls District BLM.

Materials Needed: Type IV Urban Interface Pumper; Type III Wildland Fire Truck; and Type I Water Tender.

Infrastructure Updates: Update radio communications; purchase new wildland firefighter equipment; purchase new hazmat unit; purchase new mobile storage unit; purchase new equipment trailer.

Rangeland Fire Education Needs: There is a continued need for public fire education and prevention within the county including “redzone” and “firewise” programs.

Grants: Various grants will be applied for wildland firefighting.

Additional Areas: continued use of mutual aid agreements with County rural fire districts and other organizations.

New Fire Hydrant: New fire hydrant source is needed five miles East, and ½ mile South.

Update County Wide Recommendations: Update Camas County WUI and mitigation map in cooperation with Twin Falls District BLM.

New Growth, Subdivisions, Structures, and Homes: There is new growth within Fairfield and the Fire Protection District. Need to account for properties being sold and bought. Need to monitor growth of home in subdivisions. Need to continue to work with all homeowners to identify risks and provide recommendations for reducing fire risks. Addressing of home sites is a top priority. Access to existing properties and new properties need to be addressed within the county (access roads, turnarounds, etc).

High Risk Areas: Grass and brush fires are a high risk. Need to address suppression, structure protection, protection of out buildings, protection of vegetation, monitoring fire behavior and mutual aid.